CLAIMS

- 1-54. (Cancelled)
- 55. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:

populating an access control list with a destination user group identifier, wherein said populating is performed by a network device and comprises sending a request to another network device, and receiving a response from said another network device, wherein said response includes said destination user group identifier, wherein

said access control list is a role-based access control list,

said destination user group identifier identifies a destination user group of a destination,

said access control list comprises a source user group field configured to store a source user group identifier and a destination user group field configured to store a destination user group identifier,

said source user group comprises a plurality of source network devices, said source user group is assigned to said source based on a role of said source,

said destination user group comprises a plurality of destination network devices,

said destination user group is assigned to said destination based on a role of said destination, and

said access control list is configured to allow said source user group identifier and said destination user group identifier to be compared.

- 56. (Cancelled)
- 57. (Cancelled)

- 58. (Original) The method of claim 55, further comprising: comparing a user group of a packet with said destination user group.
- 59. (Original) The method of claim 58, wherein said user group of said packet is a source user group, said destination user group is a user group of a destination of said packet, and said destination is said destination of said packet.
- 60. (Original) The method of claim 59, wherein said source user group is assigned to a source of said packet based on a role of said source, and said destination user group is assigned to said destination based on a role of said destination.
- 61. (Original) The method of claim 59, wherein said source user group is indicated by a source user group identifier stored in said packet, and said destination user group is indicated by a destination user group stored in a network device receiving said packet.
- 62. (Original) The method of claim 59, further comprising:
 determining said source user group; and
 determining said destination user group by looking up said destination user group
 in an access control list.
- 63. (Cancelled)
- 64. (Original) The method of claim 62, wherein said determining said source user group comprises:
 - extracting a source user group identifier from said packet, wherein said source user group identifier identifies said source user group.

- 65. (Previously Presented) A computer program product comprising:
- a first set of instructions, executable on a computer system, configured to populate an access control list with a destination user group identifier, wherein said to populate is performed by a network device and comprises sending a request to another network device, and receiving a response from said another network device, wherein said response includes said destination user group identifier, wherein

said access control list is a role-based access control list,

- said destination user group identifier identifies a destination user group of a destination,
- said access control list comprises a source user group field configured to store a source user group identifier and a destination user group field configured to store a destination user group identifier, said source user group comprises a plurality of source network devices, said source user group is assigned to said source based on a role of said source,
- said destination user group comprises a plurality of destination network devices,
- said destination user group is assigned to said destination based on a role of said destination, and
- said access control list is configured to allow said source user group identifier and said destination user group identifier to be compared; and
- computer readable storage media, wherein said computer program product is encoded in said computer readable storage media.
- 66. (Original) The computer program product of claim 65, further comprising: a second set of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to compare a user group of a packet with said destination user group.

- 67. (Original) The computer program product of claim 66, wherein said user group of said packet is a source user group, said destination user group is a user group of a destination of said packet, and said destination is said destination of said packet.
- 68. (Original) The computer program product of claim 67, further comprising: a third set of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to determine said source user group; and a fourth set of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to
- a fourth set of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to determine said destination user group by looking up said destination user group in an access control list.
- 69. (Original) The computer program product of claim 68, wherein said third set of instructions comprises:
 - a first subset of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to extracting a source user group identifier from said packet, wherein said source user group identifier identifies said source user group.
 - 70. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:
 - means for populating an access control list with a destination user group identifier, wherein said populating is performed by a network device and comprises sending a request to another network device, and receiving a response from said another network device, wherein said response includes said destination user group identifier, wherein said access control list is a role-based access control list, said destination user group identifier identifies a destination user group of a destination,
 - said access control list comprises a source user group field configured to store a source user group identifier and a destination user group field configured to store a destination user group identifier, said source user group comprises a plurality of source network devices,

said source user group is assigned to said source based on a role of said source,

said destination user group comprises a plurality of destination network devices,

said destination user group is assigned to said destination based on a role of said destination, and

said access control list is configured to allow said source user group identifier and said destination user group identifier to be compared.

- 71. (Original) The apparatus of claim 70, further comprising: means for comparing a user group of a packet with said destination user group.
- 72. (Original) The apparatus of claim 71, wherein said user group of said packet is a source user group, said destination user group is a user group of a destination of said packet, and said destination is said destination of said packet.
- 73. (Original) The apparatus of claim 72, further comprising:
 means for determining said source user group; and
 means for determining said destination user group by looking up said destination
 user group in an access control list.
- 74. (Original) The apparatus of claim 73, wherein said means for determining said source user group comprises:

means for extracting a source user group identifier from said packet, wherein said source user group identifier identifies said source user group.

75-117. (Cancelled)